

## **FISHING FOR LITTER SCOTLAND**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

### **SCOTTISH FISHERMEN REWARDED FOR HELPING CLEAN OUR SEAS**

KIMO UK's Fishing for Litter Scotland project was honoured to receive the RSPB's prestigious Nature of Scotland Award for Marine Conservation during its 4th Annual Award ceremony at the Grand Sheraton in Edinburgh last week. The award, sponsored by Northlink Ferries, recognises an *"outstanding contribution to the conservation or sustainable management of Scotland's precious marine resources"*.



KIMOUK's Chairman, Cllr Raymond Christie said *"Thank you to the RSPB and Northlink Ferries. This award is great recognition for the hard work carried out over the last ten years by fishermen and harbour staff right around the Scottish coastline. Marine Litter is a huge problem and we all need to do as much we can to stop litter, particularly plastic, getting into our seas. The world is just waking up to the fact that we need to stop putting rubbish in our seas and oceans and start taking it out"*

Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment said *"Marine litter is a serious issue in Scottish seas and across the global oceans, litter can harm wildlife and the marine environment. It also impacts on our marine industries through damage to subsea and coastal infrastructure, vessels and fishing gear."*

*"I am delighted that Fishing for Litter has received an award for marine conservation, this ground-breaking project is making a real difference in cleaning up Scotland's seas and this award is recognition of their excellent work. I would encourage others to follow their lead and consider the actions they can take to ensure that litter does not enter the marine environment."*

Ross Dougal, President of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, said: *"We are delighted that the work of our fishermen in removing marine litter has been*

*recognised with this prestigious award. Scottish fishermen are enthusiastic participants in the Fishing for Litter initiative and are committed to ensuring that our seas are clean and healthy.”*

KIMO International’s President, Karsten Filsø (Holstebro Kommune, Denmark) said *“I am delighted to hear of KIMO UK’s success in winning this award for its Fishing for Litter Scotland project. Marine litter is one of the most significant global problems affecting the marine environment, killing seabirds, fish and mammals. It’s an eyesore on our beaches and costs the fishing industry money in lost time. Through the Fishing for Litter initiatives, the KIMO organisation along with ports and fishing vessels are making a positive contribution to reducing litter in our seas, which benefits marine wildlife, our fishing industry and our coastline.”*

The Fishing for Litter project was introduced to Scottish waters by KIMO UK in 2005. By removing barriers to landing the litter at participating harbours, it encourages skippers of fishing vessels to land litter they catch in their nets during their normal fishing activities.

Now celebrating its tenth year, it has seen the collection of over 900 tonnes of marine litter. It operates from fifteen ports around the Scottish coastline with more than 220 vessels participating.

900 tonnes is the equivalent of more than two Olympic sized swimming pools<sup>1</sup> full of litter. The litter originates from a number of sources, including a significant amount from the general public. Much of it is plastic that, if left in the sea, would spend many years in the environment slowly breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces that have the potential to affect the marine food chain<sup>2</sup>.

The project is funded by a range of organisations including; John Lewis, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Crown Estate, the Scottish Government, Aberdeenshire Council, Seagreen Wind Energy, Beatrice Offshore Wind Ltd, Total E&P UK Ltd, the Scottish Fishermen’s Trust, UK Fisheries Offshore Oil & Gas Legacy Trust Fund Limited (FLTC), Tarbert Harbour Authority, Lerwick Port Authority, Peterhead Port Authority, Scrabster Harbour Trust, and Ullapool Harbour Trust.

Participating ports include: Eyemouth, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Scrabster, Lerwick, Cullivoe, Scalloway, Kinlochbervie, Ullapool, Tarbert, Rothesay, Campbelltown, Isle of Whithorn and Kircudbright. Troon will join December 2015



**For more information contact;**

<sup>1</sup> The average density of litter collected during 2014 is 160kg/m<sup>3</sup> - KIMO UK  
<sup>2</sup> Arthur et al. 2009, Teuten et al. 2009, Thompson et al. 2009, GESAMP 2010

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#### Notes to Editors:

**Fishing for Litter** is an active environmental response to the increase of marine litter in the seas around Great Britain, Scandinavia and Western Europe. Through the participation of local fishermen, this project is designed to recover marine litter, whilst raising awareness of the significant detrimental impact such waste can have on the marine environment..

**KIMO** (Local Authorities International Environmental Organisation) is an association of coastal local authorities whose goal is to eliminate pollution from the Northern Seas. The organisation's members include 75 member authorities in 10 countries representing more than 6 million inhabitants. KIMO UK is the United Kingdom network of the organisation representing the UK members.

#### Sponsors:

